

Norfolk
Department
of Utilities

Monthly
Report



At Work

Vol. 6, Issue 10

www.norfolk.gov/utilities

April 2006



Assistant Superintendent Ken Taylor (lt.) conducts the Performance Evaluation session of the New Supervisor Orientation.



Management Services Administrator Melanie Pesola (rt.) opens the training with an overview of the day's session.

Utilities New Supervisor Orientation focuses on real-work experiences

Early in 2005, the Department of Utilities Supervisor Committee identified the department's need for training of new supervisors. The idea was to create a venue where those who had recently taken on the supervisory positions could receive consistent information about the many situations they would face and the policies and procedures that will help guide them in their new role.

The Supervisor Committee then volunteered to develop a training program to share their experiences and knowledge and help Utilities employees with the transition into supervisory roles.

As supervisors, the committee was able to identify the areas most important in such a training and begin formulating the curriculum for the courses. They agreed that the goals



First participants in Utilities New Supervisor Orientation: (First row, lt. to rt.) Janell Elliott, Scott Howerin, David Speer, Al Vines, Thomas King; (middle row) Gregory Jacobs, John Jones, Dorissa Whitney, Quinton Nottingham, Corey Smith, Stephanie Tinsley; (back row) Utilities Director Kristen Lentz, Melanie Pesola, Jeff Nichols, D-Uan Bibbons, Marc Sawyer, Carl Broadnax, Ken Taylor. **Not pictured:** John Lerner, James Jordan.

would be to:

- Prepare supervisors for success by sharing information, policies, and lessons learned;
- Support supervisors in their many roles and with their many supervisory responsibilities;
- Promote shared knowledge and values among all supervisors across the Department of Utilities.

It took about a year for the program to be fully developed, and it is now in the fourth week of its first 10-week "semester,"

called Level I. The topics covered over the 10 weeks include the many and varied areas supervisors deal with

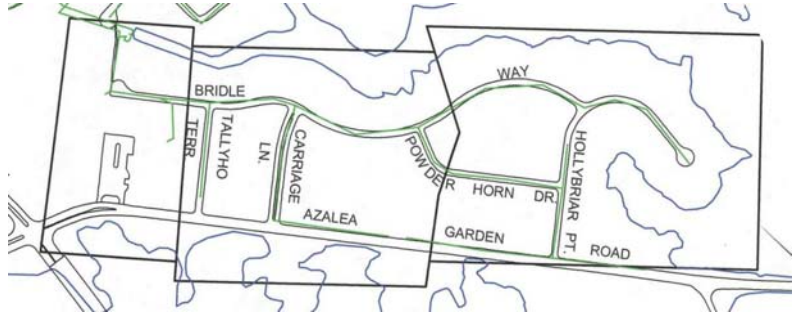
Utilities CIP Update

Glengariff Sewer Rehabilitation

The sanitary sewer upgrade for the Glengariff area began in March and will improve the sewer services to the 93 residences in that neighborhood.

The project will consist of inspecting existing sewer lines, replacing sewer laterals to the private property lines, upgrading 22 manholes and replacing three. About 275 linear feet of deep sewer lines will be replaced around Pump Station # 71 on Bridle Way.

The cost of the project is approximately \$1.9 million and is scheduled for completion in Fall 2006.♦



Orientation, from page 1

everyday, such as customer service, purchasing rules and budgeting, performance

valuations, disciplinary action, accident reporting, interviewing and hiring, sexual harassment, and policies and procedures.

The appeal of this training is that each topic is presented by a combination of management, office, and field supervisors who conduct the sessions from experienced points of view.

"It's a valuable type of training," said Dorissa Whitney, Human Resources Generalist, "because it is facilitated by people who actually deal with the situations everyday while following the City's policies."

According to Dorissa, it's the informality and size of the sessions (15 participants in Level I), and the interaction between the in-house facilitators and attendees that make this an exceptional training experience.

Each facilitator was specially selected and invited to participate based on his or her experience with and history of performance in the topic area.

Cathy Harrah, Enterprise Controller for the Department of Utilities, and two of her co-workers, Maggie Johnson and Barbara Lowe, facilitated the session on purchasing, budgeting, and overtime. The mix of experiences was particularly helpful in that session.

"I presented information on procurement and purchasing policies," said Cathy. "The supervisors need to know about it, but I don't know how many of them are directly involved with it."

Maggie's presentation on calculating overtime, however, is something supervisors deal with regularly in the operations divisions, where employees must sometimes tend to emergencies after work-

ing hours.

The orientation sessions have been valuable experiences for seasoned, as well as new, supervisors.

Marc Sawyer, Customer Service Supervisor for Water Accounts, is one of the attendees for the debut sessions.

"I've been in supervision for 15 years, but not here in the City," said Marc. "This training was a good refresher course for me for overall supervisory skills and to reinforce the City policies I need to remember."

Marc also took advantage of another aspect of the training.

"It gave me a chance to interact with other supervisors that I wouldn't normally see and talk to in the course of a day."

As a facilitator, Cathy Harrah reaped the same type of benefit from the training.

"I enjoyed presenting," said Cathy. "It was a learning experience for me, too, because I found out what is really important to other employees."

Level II of the New Supervisor Orientation will be held this coming fall. Although the curriculum is still in development, the plans are to include topics such as "The Eight Core Competencies", "In the Public Eye", "Emergency Planning and Preparedness", and "Goal Setting, performance Indicators, and Benchmarking."

Level I of the New Supervisor Orientation program began on March 13th, with sessions held every Monday, 9 to 11 am, at the Norfolk Wellness and Fitness Center.♦



Water-Saving Device #61

Next time you add or replace a flower or shrub, choose a low water-use plant for year-round landscape color and save up to 550 gallons each year.

There are a number of ways to
save water, and they all start with
you

